

## Message Text

SECRET

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62

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 GAC-01 TRSE-00 MBFR-03 SAJ-01 EB-11 EA-11

OMB-01 RSR-01 /131 W

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R 111343 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7512

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

S E C R E T BRUSSELS 2617

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BE

SUBJECT: FORMER PRIME MINISTER' S COMMENTS ON US- EUROPEAN  
RELATIONS

REF: BRUSSELS 2597

1. GASTON EYSKENS, MINISTER OF STATE AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER,  
GAVE ME HIS VIEWS IN A CONVERSATION MAY 10 ON DR. KISSINGER' S  
ADDRESS AT THE ASSOCIATED PRESS LUNCHEON. HE COMMENDED THE TEXT  
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FOR ITS CONCEPTUAL RIGOUR AND WIDE RANGE: QTE EACH WORD HAS BEEN CAREFULLY WEIGHED UNQTE. HE SAID THAT WE NEED NOT BE DISCOURAGED BY THE CARPING COMMENTS OF BELGIUM'S FRENCH LANGUAGE PRESS WHICH TOOK ITS CUE FROM PARIS AND RECEIVED FAVORS-- HONORIFIC AND, PROBABLY, MORE TANGIBLE-- FROM THE GOF. HE SAID THAT THE LINKAGE OF POLITICAL, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ISSUES IN ATLANTIC RELATIONSHIPS WAS SO OBVIOUS A REALITY AS TO COMPEL THE EUROPEANS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH IT. THE EUROPEANS HAVE TO PICK UP A BIGGER SHARE OF U. S. DEFENSE COSTS IN EUROPE, FOR, QUITE UNDERSTANDABLY, THE U. S. WILL BE RELUCTANT TO RUN A PAYMENTS DEFICIT THAT, IN PART, DERIVES FROM UNREQUITED MILITARY EXPENDITURES IN EUROPE.

2. EYSKENS ASKED ME WHETHER I HAD RECEIVED THE GOB'S REACTION TO DR. KISSINGER'S SPEECH. SEEING NO GOOD REASON TO HEDGE, I SUPPLIED EYSKENS WITH THE GIST OF THE ELSLANDE- DAVIGNON REMARKS ( SEE REFTEL). EYSKENS SAID THAT THERE WAS NO SUCH THING AS A UNITED EUROPE: EUROPE HAD ACHIEVED A CUSTOMS UNION AND LITTLE ELSE. THE PRESIDENT COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO ENGAGE, IN THE U. S.- EUROPEAN DIALOGUE WITH M. ORTOLI, THE FEEBLE HEAD OF SAID CUSTOMS UNION. HE, EYSHKENS, COULD CONCEIVE OF ONLY ONE POSSIBILITY OF A PRESIDENTIAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE EC, NAMELY A MEETING WITH THE EC CHIEFS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT ( M. POMPIDOU HELD BOTH JOBS) AT BRUSSELS ( SEE BONN 06738) OR SOME OTHER PLACE. WHETHER OR NOT THE NINE WOULD, AT THIS OCCASION, SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE DEPENDED ON THE EUROPEANS AND NOT ON THE PRESIDENT. HE THOUGHT THEY WOULD NOT DO SO. MR. POMPIDOU HAS BEEN OPPOSED TO THIS KIND OF SUMMIT MEETING IN WHICH FRENCH POLITICAL INFLUENCE AND PRESITGE WOULD BE LIKELY TO BE DILUTED. OF COURSE, A COMMON DECLARATION WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT BEFORE THE MEETING, LEST IT FAIL ALTOGETHER TO ADVANCE U. S.- EC RELATIONS. AT PRESENT, THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE OF FRENCH WILLINGNESS TO JOIN THE OTHER MEMBERS IN A POSITIVE APPROACH TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE U. S.- EUROPEAN RELATIONS. PERHAPS, THE PRESIDENT WILL BE ABLE IN REYKJAVIK TO BRING M. POMPIDOU AROUND. HAVING ARGUED AT PARIS THE CASE FOR A COMMON POLITICAL POLICY WITH M. POMPIDOU, EYSKENS REMAINED SKEPTICAL.

3. EYSKENS SAID HE BELIEVED THAT IN MATTERS OF FOREIGN POLICY THE PRESENT BELGIAN GOVERNMENT WAS LESS EFFECTIVE THAN ITS PREDECESSOR: THE SOCIALISTS, PRIME MINISTER LEBURTON INCLUDED, WERE INEXPERIENCED AND LITTLE INTERESTED IN FOREIGN POLICY, FOR  
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THE PARTY HAD LEFT FOREIGN POLICY FOR MANY YEARS TO M. SPAAK AND HAD FAILED TO DEVELOP A SUCCESSOR TO THIS TOWERING FIGURE. M. ELSLANDE, AN HONEST AND INTELLIGENT MAN, HAS HAD IN HIS PREVIOUS JOBS LITTLE CONTACT WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND LACKS INTELLECTUAL DEPTH. EYSKENS THOUGHT BELGIUM MIGHT LOSE THE EMINENCE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS THAT, DESPITE HER LIMITED RESOURCES,

SHE HAD ACHIEVED UNDER SPAAK AND HARMEL.

4. EYSKENS CONCLUDED HIS REMARKS WITH A PLEA FOR U. S. UNDER-  
STANDING OF THE INTERESTS OF THE SMALLER EUROPEAN NATIONS AND THE  
POLITICALLY STRATEGIC ROLE THEY COULD PLAY, NOT ONLY IN  
EUROPEAN, BUT ALSO U. S.- EUROPEAN AFFAIRS. TAKING HIS LEAVE,  
M. EYSKENS CHEERFULLY TOLD ME THAT U. S. DOMESTIC COMMOTIONS WERE  
INCONSEQUENTIAL AS REGARDS THE ATTITUDES OF EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS  
AS WELL AS EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION.  
STRAUSZ- HUPE

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NMAFVVZCZ

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**TAGS:** PFOR, BE  
**To:** ANKARA  
ATHENS  
BONN  
COPENHAGEN  
EUR  
LISBON  
LONDON

LUXEMBOURG  
SECSTATE WASHDC

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